

Introducing *JID* Journal Club

Many dermatology training programs in the United States include weekly exercises in which residents and faculty members review selected papers from the medical literature. Such exercises, commonly identified as “journal clubs,” are described in some detail in the program information that is periodically examined by the Residency Review Committee (RRC) for Dermatology. Having served for several years on the RRC for Dermatology, one of us (PRB) has had numerous opportunities to learn about the construction of the various journal clubs around the country. There is great diversity not only in their formats and attendance requirements but also in the types of papers and journals that are reviewed. Importantly, there has been a trend away from the *Journal of Investigative Dermatology*. And, in parallel, leaders of many training programs have reported increasing difficulty in integrating the basic science literature into this educational activity. That difficulty reflects the growing complexities of science and the expansion of the scientific base from which skin biology and skin pathology continue to emerge.

The changes noted above are not unique to journal clubs in training programs. Rather, they are reflected even in the evolution of the contents of the *Journal*, because its scientific base has become increasingly complex. To keep the whole of dermatological science relevant, there has been growing emphasis on educating all readers and on the integration of dermatological science into a more coherent whole through Editorials, Commentaries, and Perspectives. The idea has been to place the diverse elements of contemporary research into appropriate perspective, for residency training programs as well as for all other readers of the *Journal*.

Another trend established over the past decade has been to publish a greater number

of science-based clinical studies in the *Journal*, including investigator-initiated clinical trials as well as epidemiologic studies, which not only are more accessible to the general readership but also show more direct relevance to clinical practice. Importantly, the inferences made in such articles are still grounded in the best science.

Our next step in the process of making scientific achievement both useful and relevant to those in training is to provide guidance about how selected papers might be employed. To that end, one of us (RSK) will identify one or more papers each month to serve as “journal club papers.” For each, a series of “thought questions” will be constructed and, utilizing contributions from trainees at the University of Miami Department of Dermatology and Cutaneous Surgery, brief answers will be included. Our plan, at least at the beginning, is to emphasize clinical science, but in time we may choose to include more basic studies, although we will focus on those with clinical implications. The first month’s Journal Club paper has been identified, and the questions are presented in this issue. Brief answers are available on the *JID* website. It is hoped that this newly developed *Journal of Investigative Dermatology*/University of Miami “Journal Club” will facilitate use of the *Journal* in resident education.

We have several goals in mind: (i) to introduce trainees to excellent studies, (ii) to provide a mechanism for the (re)introduction of the *Journal* into the educational activities of many training programs, (iii) to enliven journal club discussions, and (iv) to introduce trainees to our Table of Contents, where they may find the titles of other relevant papers as well as Editorials, Commentaries, and Perspectives.

As is always the case, we would be delighted to receive comments about this new feature from any of our readers.

Paul R. Bergstresser

Editor

Robert S. Kirsner

Associate Editor

Journal of Investigative Dermatology (2007) **127**, 2067.
doi:10.1038/sj.jid.5701039